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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Flying was stopped at night, in rainy and hazy weather, during snowfalls and heavy wind. The planes were aloft for about one hour, often even longer. Ground take-off run about 600 meters, then followed a very steep climb to an altitude of 2,000 to 2,500 meters. The gliding approach was performed in a straight line from an altitude of 1,000 meters and a distance of about 1,500 meters. Length of landing run much shorter than take-off run.

While the jet fighters were readied for their take-off a small cart was parked beside them. Fellow-Pws stated that this was a preheater or a starter motor.

b. Conventional fighters:

Except in heavy rain and snowfall there was almost daily flying with conventional fighters, also at night. Duration of flight: 2 hours and more. Preheating during the winter: 20 to 30 minutes.

5. Description of the observed aircraft:

a. Jet fighter:

(1) Type I seen up to March 1949.

Jet engine in fuselage, nose wheel, pronounced sweep-back, angular wings with rounded tips. Mid-wing or semi-high-wing monoplane, flat cockpit set at about leading edge of wing. Elevator assembly set high at rudder assembly. The entire tail assembly looked as if mounted on some sort of stick slightly above the tail. Armament was not observed. A glittering tube about 40 centimeters long and projecting to the fore was particularly noted on the left-hand side of the fuselage.

(2) Type II, a slight modification of type I, was observed since March 1949. The wings had a more pronounced sweep-back and showed a bend to the rear in the last third. Wings had a slight dihedral and the rudder assembly was higher. Type II also had a greater speed and maneuverability than type I.

b. iston-powered fighters:

Standard fighter type fitted with radial engine and tail wheel. Expert PWs compared this type with the FW-190 and the La-5.

6. Fuel supply:

There was a pipe line from a fuel depot on the Oka River to the airfield.

7. Security measures:

The plant and the factory field were surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. Sentries were on duty at day and patrols watched the installations at night.

Searchlights placed on the roofs of workshops illuminated the runway.

No AAA emplacements and no camouflage were observed.

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8. Rumors:

Two German engineers serving as test pilots were said to be employed in the plant.

9. A strikingly large number of groups composed of high-ranking officers inspected the plant in the Summer of 1949.

10. Rate of production:

The output of the plant was often discussed in the camp. The general estimate was:

- a. Since March 1949 two jet fighters per day.
- b. Conventional aircraft are not produced. Source supported this assumption by pointing out that, contrary to the jet fighters, the conventional fighters flew very irregularly and sometimes in formations of 9 or 10 planes.

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Comment:

a. The data on the aircraft plant and the factory field are rather scanty. The estimated length of the runway (500 meters) is incorrect, as an aerial photograph shows the runway to actually be 1,200 meters long. This rectification is important in view of the length of the take-off and landing runs stated in para 11a.

Attachment: Sketch of Gorki/Sormovo Airfield

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